

REMARKS

In the Specification

Because the number of amendments would make legibility difficult, a Substitute Specification, both in marked up and clean versions, is submitted herewith. These amendments have been introduced to conform the specification to American English usage. No new matter has been added.

It is believed that the amended Abstract included in the Substitute Specification overcomes the Examiner's objections by removing all references to reference characters (T1, T2) or (Tl, T2).

In the Claims

Claims 1-4 are pending in the application. In the present amendment, claims 1-4 have been canceled and new claims 5-14 have been added. Therefore, upon entry of the present amendment, claims 5-14 will be subject to examination.

It is believed that new claims 5-14 are novel both over USPN 4, 321,975 to Dyer ("Dyer") and USPN 3,788,423 to Nittinger et al. ("Nuttinger"), cited by the Examiner.

Dyer discloses a slurry diverter designed to hold back air/water/dirt slurry from escaping the drill hole at the well drilling site. Dyer, Summary of the Invention.

Nuttinger discloses a plenum chamber for covering and sealing a bore hole opening at the surface of the ground and for reducing the noise produced during a drilling operation. Nuttinger, Summary of the Invention.

Therefore, neither reference discloses all the elements of independent claims 5 and 14, or of the claims depending therefrom. More particularly, neither reference discloses "a protective screen panel coupled to the structure, wherein the protective screen panel is movable from a first position substantially exposing the inner and the outer drivers and at least a portion of the shaft when the drilling machine is not in

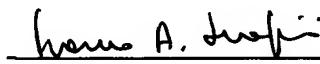
operation, to a second position encircling an aperture between the drill rod and the drill sleeve when the drilling machine is in operation, a slurry being discharged from the aperture."

Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, it is submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance. A notice to that effect is therefore respectfully requested.

Dated: January 16, 2008

Respectfully submitted,



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